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## EVENINGS ABROAD.

In the summer of 18—, I happened to visit the watering place of Carlsbad, where, although I had arrived without any intention of remaining, the beauty of the surrounding scenery, the salubrity and pleasantness of the climate, and above all, the charm of the society assembled, detained me so agreeably, that I was induced to put off the day of my departure for weeks, and at last for months; so that it was now late in the autumn, and I found myself still a resident of the place, and more than ever unwilling to leave it. Although most of those who had sought it in the gay season of fashion were fled, and few remained save those whom health or private circumstances induced to linger; yet among these there were some I should have grieved to part with—for the decrease of our circle had drawn us into a closer intimacy than, under other circumstances, were possible; and we now lived together like one large family party. As the season advanced, and the chill of approaching winter rendered our evening excursions through the park, and the neighbouring mountains, no longer agreeable, we usually assembled, after dark, round the fire, in a large old wainscotted saloon, the windows of which commanded an extensive view over the black forests and desolate plains of Bohemia; and then tales, reading, and music, filled up the interval till we separated for the night; and so delightful had these evenings already become, that I have looked longingly forward during the entire day, for the hour that should again bring us together round the hearth: and now, after a lapse of years, I look back upon them 'with mingled emotions of pleasure and regret'—for I cannot wholly subscribe to the so often quoted sentiment of the Italian poet,

"Nessun maggior dolore  
Che'n ricordarsi dal tempo felice"—

Amongst our party were many military men, of various nations, ranks and services, some of whom amused us with wonderful tales of Indian craft and subtlety, of bivouacking in the wild woods, by the side of fires lighted around them to scare the beasts of prey; and then we parted, and dreamt that the very winds howling around our lonely dwelling were the war-whoop of some attacking tribe. Others, who had passed their lives more peacefully in courts, would tell of fêtes, and moonlight nights passed beneath tented pavilions, cheered by sound of lute and mandolin, chanting their sweet wild airs in the stillness of their own blue Italian sky; and again, those who drew upon the stores of their reading or their memory, would recite a ballad or a tale, which never failed to call into exercise critical remarks from the circle; and it was delightful to mark the different impressions made upon the various individuals of different ages, sexes, and countries. But, as I intend introducing you formally to our party, I shall first present you to an old Hungarian noble, and his two lovely daughters; then the Saxon general Von Seebach, one who had travelled far, and always with his eyes open—a fine old soldierly figure, in blue uniform studded with stars, crosses and cordons; then a beautiful Milanese widow, Mariucci Anoni: but by far the most remarkable of all, was a small elderly gentleman, whose nation none of us could discover—for he spoke the languages of the continent and of England with perfect fluency, and without peculiarity of accent or pronunciation; he dressed in black, and wore no insignia of title, although he was always styled Monsieur le Comte: the name he went by was Edel-

stein, but this undoubtedly was only feigned, for he had often been at Carlsbad before, but always under different titles. His munificence to the servants had procured him great respect and attention, at the same time that he himself lived with the greatest plainness and simplicity: he spoke but seldom, and once only gave any hint as to his rank: he carried a magnificent gold snuff-box, set round with brilliants of immense value, inclosing a miniature of a lady about thirty years of age, with a high and majestic tone of beauty: the initials under the portrait were M. T.; one of our party had remarked upon the extreme beauty of the box and the miniature, when he proudly said, "That was a present from the Queen Marie Therese to my father, when"—and then, suddenly recollecting and checking himself, he rose, and left the room.

To him we had a perfect contrast in the person of a French marquis, La Valliere, gay, conceited, foppish and gallant, and certainly he was the life of our party; although evidently not a favourite with the old gentleman I have just mentioned, he was the *bien aimé* of the ladies, to whom his musical talents had rendered him indispensable. We had seen but little of the old count, who by this time had acquired the sobriquet of the stranger, for some weeks; he had dined constantly in his own apartments, and indeed we all felt relieved by his absence, for the staid gravity of his demeanour, and the piercing glance of his small dark eye, had always thrown a gloomy distrust over our party when he was present. One evening, however, the door slowly opened, and he re-appeared amongst us. We were so astonished at his sudden entrance, that we could not commence the conversation, and for some moments there was a dead silence in the room. At last the young French marquis, anxious to relieve us from this feeling of constraint, proposed that we should each write upon a slip of paper the name of some German author, who happened to be our greatest favourite, and whose works, if we could choose but one, we should prefer to carry with us into solitude. The old Hungarian was appointed to receive the votes upon the occasion; and it will readily be believed that many wrote the names of Schiller and Goëthe, "familiar in our mouths as household words;" some, those of Herder, Wieland, and others; while not a few preferred Bürger and Lessing: what was our surprise, however, when the old count approached the table, and writing a name upon a slip of paper, handed it to the baron; in a moment all was expectation and excitement; the previous selections were in an instant forgotten or disregarded, and numerous voices faintly whispered, "What could *he* have chosen?" Our surprise was greatly heightened by knowing that in general he took no part in the conversation, but always appeared wrapped up in his own reflections, unless when his attention was excited by some favourite air, and he would for a moment seem to relax the mournful gravity of his pallid features; but then in an instant the smile had passed away, and he was dark and passionless as before. At last the paper was opened, and the name of Hoffman read aloud.

Hoffman, almost instantly exclaimed all—Hoffman, cried Henriette, the dreadful narrator of secret murders and dark conspiracies, the believer in animal magnetism and supernatural influence; oh! who would choose him? you certainly would not, said La Valliere turning to the second daughter of the baron, whose gay and laughing blue eyes sparkled with wit and raillery—you certainly would not "*ni moi non plus*," and then in a lower tone, and with a look full of expression, he added some words which I could not hear, for at the moment the old Saxon General broke out with Hagel and Blitzen!—I know that Hoffman. I saw

him once, it was in Hamburg, I was quartered there with a regiment of Uhlancers, and was loitering one evening along the Lindens, when my attention was arrested by the noise of a great crowd of persons hollowing and shouting, fire! fire! and turning down upon the quay, I saw a large house, before which thousands of people had now assembled, perfectly wrapt in flame and smoke; the whole surface of the water shone from the red glare, like a sea of molten fire, and the sailors stood upon the rigging of their ships, casting down buckets of water to prevent the contact of the flames, and at the moment I looked, the fire had reached the roof, which being consumed almost in an instant, fell in with a loud crash. A shriek of horror broke from the crowd, and a universal cry of save him, save him; I looked up, and saw in the uppermost room of the house, a man sitting at a table, he appeared to be writing with the greatest earnestness, and perfectly unconscious of the terrific scene before him, and of his personal danger: by the fitful gleams of the flames, occasionally interrupted by dense masses of smoke, I could trace his features as perfectly as if he were beside me; he seemed middle aged, and the pale, wan and ghastly hue of his face, as he appeared at the moment working with some dread power within, was frightful and demoniac; he stopped writing, and placing his hand within his bosom, so,—looked up, never shall I forget that look; there he stood, amid the burning timbers, and the masses of falling roof, calm, motionless, and undismayed: his long dark hair fell in tangled clusters above his face and forehead, and his illumined, yet passionless countenance, glared on us like that of some being of the nether world: ladders had been laid against the wall, and all hope of saving him depended on his reaching one of these; a heavy mass which had long withstood the attack of the flames, now tottered, reeled, and fell: a long dark column of mingled smoke and dust shot up from earth to sky; the building was wrapt in darkness, no flames were perceptible, and to the crash of the terrific fall succeeded a silence more appalling than ten thousand thunders. At last the flames again broke forth, the mass of darkness swept by, and now we saw a man descending one of the ladders, he was still high up, but a flash of bright flame lightened the air at the instant, and there was a loud cry of it is he, it is he; and he it was. He reached the ground in safety; I was near him when he stepped from the ladder on the firm earth, one hand still fixed in his bosom; he spoke not, he heeded us not, he did not even seem to regard the danger he had just escaped, but pushing his way quietly through the crowd, suddenly disappeared; and that man was Hoffman. I inquired after him, but have heard that he was never after seen in Hamburg; they say that he was mad, and indeed I believe it; it is certain he feared to remain alone at night when he was composing his romances, which any one who has read them can readily credit. Mad! exclaimed the old count, who had hitherto not spoken a word, but cast dark and scornful glances upon each of us, as we expressed our various opinions of his favourite author;—mad! can the workings of that mind which within the depth of its own dread recesses could image the past, the present, aye and even darkly shadow forth the future! who felt the secret influence of those all-seeing powers which guide and rule us, and make us what we are, be mad? but I ask pardon, said he, lowering his tone, I have spoken too warmly if I might be permitted, however, to tell you one of this same maniac's stories, you would, I doubt not, form a more favourable judgment. Oh no, no; exclaimed Mariucci, nothing of ghosts, hobgoblins or spirits, I intreat: I shall die with horror if you

do. The story, by all means, exclaimed a number of voices at the same moment. Well then said he, I must even conciliate my fair friend, to whose sweet guitar I am so bounden that I feel I must show my gratitude, and if she will not hear of "spectres dark and drear," she will not, I hope, object to list a tale of love; such Hoffman has also touched upon, and though I sacrifice the characteristic of my favourite, by so broad a departure from his usual style, I prefer telling it, to endangering thy peace, fair daughter of the south. This he spoke with an air of gallantry quite new to him, and we readily made way, that he might take his place in the midst of us, when he thus began:—

THE DOGE AND DOGARESSA.

Such was the name prefixed to a picture by the celebrated Kolbe, which appeared in the exhibition of the Berlin Academy of Fine Arts, in September 1816. A doge in splendid robes, beside whom the dogaressa, sumptuously attired, steps forward on a balcony: he an aged portly man, with silvery beard, and strangely blended features—now expressing vigour, and again weakness; indicating pride and haughtiness, yet with some degree of mildness and benevolence mingled in his deportment. The dogaressa, young and pensive, with a dreamy wistfulness in her eye and bearing: behind them an elderly woman, and a man holding an open bongrace. On one side, by the ballustrade, is a young man blowing a conch-like horn; and in the foreground a gorgeous gondola, bearing the Venetian flag. In the background extends the sea, covered with hundreds upon hundreds of snow-white sails, glistening in the sun, and the stately towers and palaces of Venice the magnificent, are seen rising proudly from the waters. To the left are descried the winged lions of San Marco; to the right, and more in the foreground, San Giorgio Maggiore. In the golden frame of the picture is carved as follows:

Ah senza amare  
Andare sul mare  
Col sposo del mare  
Non può consolare.

One day an idle dispute arose before this picture, as to whether the artist wished merely to represent an aged, decrepit man, who, with all his splendour and magnificence, could yet but poorly meet or satisfy the feelings and affections of an ardent youthful heart; or whether he had depicted an actual historical occurrence. One by one the disputants dropped off, and at length but two passionate admirers of the noble art remained. "I know not," said one, "why we should wilfully destroy all enjoyment, by eternally explaining and explaining. I can not only accurately imagine the relation of this doge and dogaressa when in life, but am also undefinably excited by the glitter of splendour and power extended over the entire picture. See those flags with the winged lions waving in the air, the dictators of the world—O glorious Venice!" And he began to repeat Turandot's enigma of the Adriatic sea: *Dimmi, qual sia quella terribil fera, &c.* Scarcely had he ended, when a clear-toned male voice commenced Calaf's solution, *Tu quadrupede fera, &c.* A man of lofty, noble bearing, his grey mantle carelessly yet picturesquely thrown over his shoulder, had placed himself, unobserved, behind the friends, and gazed at the picture with eager sparkling eyes. They fell into conversation, and the stranger said, in an almost solemn tone—It is a peculiar mystery, that a picture is often conceived by the imagination of the artist, whose figures, previously unknown and disembodied

as clouds floating in empty space, become living, and find their home in the mind of the painter—and suddenly the picture becomes connected with the past, or it may be with the future, and is but a representation of what has occurred or will occur. Kolbe is perhaps himself ignorant that this very picture represents the Doge Marino Falieri and his spouse Annunziata. The stranger was silent, but the two friends pressed him to explain this enigma, as he had done that of the Adriatic lions. He said, have but patience, and I shall willingly illustrate the picture by recounting Falieri's history; but have you patience?—for I must be minute and circumstantial, otherwise I cannot speak of things which stand as vividly before my mind's eye as if I had myself been a spectator of them. That may also be the fact; for every historian such as I am is a kind of speaking spectre from times long past. The friends went with the stranger to a retired chamber, where, without further preface, he began as follows:

Long since—if I err not in the month of August 1354—the valiant Genoese Captain Paganino Doria defeated the Venetians, and stormed Parenzo; his well-manned galleys now cruised in the gulf close before Venice, like hungry wolves, seeking with restless eagerness to entrap their prey. A panic seized both the people and the seignorie. All who could but raise an arm seized the sword, or manned the galleys. The forces were assembled in the haven before San Nicolo. There, ships, trees, stones were sunk; chain locked to chain, to prevent the entrance of the enemy; whilst here, the wild uproar of arms resounded, and the burdens thundered down into the foaming sea. The agents of the seignorie were seen on the Rialto, wiping the cold sweat from their pallid foreheads, while with anxious countenance, and hoarse voice, they offered per cent. upon per cent. for ready specie—then as now the sinews of the war. In the unsearchable decrees of the Eternal power it was also determined, that in this moment of their greatest distress and necessity, the faithful shepherd should be torn from his endangered flock. The Doge Andrea Dandolo, whom the people called their dear little count, (*il caro contino*), because he was ever mild and friendly, and never appeared on the piazza St. Marc without money or good counsel for the necessitous, suddenly died, oppressed and overpowered by the weight of misfortune. As it always happens, that every stroke, at another time scarcely felt, falls doubly painful and severe on those already dispirited by adversity—so were the people overwhelmed with affliction, when the sullen gloomy sound of the bells of St. Marc proclaimed the death of the Duke. Their support, their hope, was gone; and they must now indeed bow the neck to the Genoese yoke. Such was the cry, notwithstanding that the loss of Dandolo was in fact little detrimental to the necessary warlike preparations. The good little count lived willingly in peace and quiet, and studied rather the wonderful conjunctions of the stars, than the enigmatical intricacies of state affairs. He understood the arrangement of the procession at the holy feast of Easter, better than the marshalling of an army. The question was now to choose a doge, at once a captain and a statesman, who could save Venice, shaken as it was to its very foundation. The senate was assembled, but nought was seen save gloomy faces, and motionless eyes fixed on the ground, the head leaning on the hand. Where find a man who could now seize the helm with vigorous grasp, and steer the vessel to a port of safety? At length Marino Badoeri, the oldest of the council, spoke: "Here," said he, "here we will not find him: look to Avignon—look to Marino

Falieri, whom we deputed to congratulate Innocent on his elevation to the popedom; elect him doge—he will avert the impending calamity. You will object that this Marino Falieri is eighty years old; that his hale appearance, his sparkling eye, the glowing red on nose and cheek, are, as his calumniators say, more attributable to Cyprus wine than to innate vigour; but believe it not. Remember the distinguished valour of Marino Falieri, when Proveditor of the fleet on the Black Sea. Reflect what must be that merit which the Procurators of San Marco rewarded with the rich earldom of Valdemarino? Thus did Bodoeri support the pretensions of Falieri, and anticipate each objection, till at length Marino was unanimously elected. Many spoke, it is true, of his fiery passions and impetuous wrath—of his ambition—of his obstinacy; but then it was said, these faults are cured by time; we therefore elect the aged and not the youthful Falieri. Thus were the dissentient voices silenced, and the people, when the election of the new doge was proclaimed, broke out in unmeasured, boundless acclamations. Know we not, that in such peril, in such disquietude and excitement, every resolution seems an inspiration from heaven? So it happened that the good little count, with all his mild piety, was quite forgotten, and every one exclaimed, “Yes, by the holy San Marco, long since should Marino have been our doge; then would not the overweening Doria have pressed us thus!”—and crippled soldiers raised their palsied hands, and cried—“This is the Falieri who smote Morbassan—the valiant captain, whose banners waved victorious in the Black Sea.” And where the people assembled, nought was spoken of save the heroic deeds of the aged Falieri, ’till the air resounded with the wild jubell, as if Doria were already defeated. It happened also that Nicolo Pisani, who, heaven knows why, instead of encountering Doria with the fleet, had sailed quietly to Sardinia, at length returned. Doria left the gulf, and what was owing to the approach of Pisani’s fleet, was ascribed to the formidable name of Marino Falieri. A kind of fanatic rapture now seized both people and seignorie, and it was resolved to receive the new doge as a messenger from heaven, bringing honour, victory, and riches, to the republic. Twelve of the nobility, each with a splendid retinue, were deputed by the senate to Verona, where, Falieri being arrived, his elevation to be the head of the republic, was solemnly proclaimed. Fifteen splendidly decorated state galleys, equipped by the Podesta of Chioggia, and commanded by his own son Taddeo Giustiniani, received the doge and his suite at Chiozza, and Falieri, with a triumphal train worthy of the mightiest monarch, proceeded to St. Clemens, where the Bucentoro awaited him.

Precisely at the moment that Marino Falieri was about to ascend the Bucentoro, (and it was on the evening of the 3d of October 1354, when the sun was already sinking,) a poor unhappy wretch lay stretched upon the hard marble pavement before the portico of the Dogana. From his emaciated body hung some rags of tattered linen, their colour no longer distinguishable, and which appeared to have once belonged to a dress such as is worn by the lowest class of porters and boat-men. Yet through the remnant of his shirt, his arm and hand appeared so white and delicate, that the noblest might have envied their colour and proportions. His very emaciation but the better displayed the pure symmetry of his well-formed limbs: and on contemplating the bright chesnut locks, which, dishevelled and tangled, shadowed his noble and beautiful forehead, the blue eyes dimmed by hopeless misery, and the finely formed brow of the unhappy youth, who seemed to count at most not more than

twenty years, it appeared but too certain, that envious fate had thrown some high-born foreigner amongst the lowest class of the people.

The youth lay, as has been said, before the portico of the dogana, motionless, the head supported on the right arm, while he gazed upon the sea with a fixed and vacant stare. One might have thought that life was fled for ever, and that in the agony of death he had been petrified to a statue, but that now and then he groaned deeply from uncontrollable agony; this might well be the pain of his left arm, which wrapped in bloody rags, lay stretched upon the pavement, and seemed to be severely wounded.

All labour ceased, the hum of business stopped, all Venice floated in thousands of barks and gondolas to meet the highly honoured Marino Falieri. Thus it happened that the wretched youth lay in lonely as well as miserable helplessness. Yet just when his weary head sunk on the pavement and he appeared to faint from exhaustion, a hoarse female voice cried out:—"Antonio, mio caro Antonio!"—Antonio with difficulty half raised himself from the ground, and turning his head towards the pillars of the dogana, from behind which the voice seemed to come, said faintly: "Who calls Antonio? who comes to throw my corpse into the sea, when I am dead?" Then a dwarfish, decrepit little old woman came wheezing and coughing towards the youth, and while she cowered down beside him, she broke out into a loathsome gibbering and wild laughter. "Foolish child," lisped the beldame, "foolish child, will'st die?—will'st thou die here, while golden fortune smiles upon thee? look up, see there the glittering evening sun-beams,—they are zecchins for thee. But thou must eat, dear Antonio—must eat and drink, for it is but hunger which has stretched thee upon the cold pavement!—the arm is soon well again."—Antonio recognised in the old crone, the singular mendicant, who sat always moaning and grinning upon the steps of the Franciscan church, and to whom he had often thrown his last remaining hard-earned quattrino, from an irresistible inward impulse. "Leave me at rest," said he, "leave me at rest, insane old woman; true, it is hunger rather than the wound which makes me powerless and miserable, these three days I have not earned a single quattrino. I was going to the cloister to beg some soup, but all my comrades are gone, there is none who will take me for charity in his boat; here have I sunk down never to rise again." "Hi, hi, hi, hi," gibbered the beldame, "why despair, why despond? thou art hungry, thou art thirsty, there is help for both. Here are dried fish, bought but yesterday on the Zecca—here is fresh limonade, here nice white bread: eat, mio caro, eat and drink, and then we will look to the wounded arm." When Antonio had wetted his parched and burning lips with the cool drink, his hunger was doubly excited, he greedily swallowed the bread and fish. The old woman in the mean time unfolded the rags from his wounded arm, and, though severely gashed it appeared rapidly healing; while anointing the wound with a salve taken from a little box, she asked, "but who then hath wounded thee, my son?" Antonio quite refreshed, and invigorated with new fire, now stood up, while with sparkling eyes and clenched right hand, he cried: "Ha!—Nicolo, the rascal, thought to maim me, because he enried me the miserable quattrino, which a beneficent hand threw to me for my toil! Thou knowest, old woman, that I support myself laboriously by carrying loads from the shipping to the German warehouse, the Fontego as it is called.—Thou knowest it well." When Antonio uttered the word "Fontego," the hag gibbered revoltingly, and grinning babbled out:—"Fontego—Fontego—Fontego"—



"Cease thy foolish laughing, if thou wilt hear me out," said Antonio, angrily; she ceased immediately, and Antonio continued: "I earned a few quattrini, purchased a new dress, and enrolled myself among the gondolieri. As I was always cheerful, industrious, and knew many a merry song, I earned more quattrini than my brethren. The envy of my comrades was excited: they calumniated me to my master, who dismissed me;—wherever I went they shouted after me, 'German dog! accursed heretic!' and three days since fell upon me at San Sebastian. I defended myself stoutly, but the treacherous Nicolo struck me to the ground with an oar. Now old woman thou hast satisfied my hunger, and thy salve has wonderfully cooled my arm; see here, I can already swing it.—Now will I once more labour stoutly!" While Antonio spoke, the old woman again laughed and babbled, while she danced and uttered wildly, "Son, my dear, dear son, row bravely—now—he comes, he comes, gold glows in the ruddy flames, row bravely!—only once more, but once again!—then never after!"

Antonio hearkened not to her, for he gazed on a magnificently splendid spectacle. The bucentoro, like a golden swan, floated before San Clemens, the Adriatic lions decking her waving flags. Surrounded by a thousand barks and gondolas, it appeared to raise its princely head, domineering over a rejoicing host, that emerged in glittering array from the abyss of the glad waters. The evening sun threw its glowing beams upon the sea, and upon Venice, so that all seemed wrapped in a sheet of brilliant fire; but while Antonio gazed enchanted and forgetful of his sorrows, the glare became blood red, and still more deeply crimson. A gloomy moaning sound swept through the air, and again re-echoed from the sea with fearful reverberation. The storm rolled on in dark clouds, and all was enveloped in deep obscurity, while the waves like howling and foaming monsters rushed ever higher and higher from the raging sea. Gondolas and barks drove here and there like scattered feathers. The bucentoro, unfitted to resist the storm, was tossed upon the billows, and the despairing cry of the distressed took place of the merry jubel of trumpet and cymbal.

Antonio gazed, benumbed, upon the scene; close by him he heard the clank as of a chain, and looking down, he saw a little skiff (chained to the pier) tossing on the billows; a sudden thought shot like lightning through his soul. He sprang into the skiff, unfastened it, and made boldly for the bucentoro. The nearer he came, he heard more clearly the cries from the vessel: "Help—help, here—save the doge! save the doge!" It is known that the small fishing boats in the gulf are, in stormy weather, more safe and manageable than the larger barks, and they hastened from all sides to save the head of the republic. But it has always happened that the eternal power has reserved the accomplishment of a bold act but for one; thus was the rescue of the doge decreed for the poor Antonio, who first reached the bucentoro in his skiff. The aged Marino Falieri, familiar with such dangers, descended without a moment's hesitation, from the splendid but treacherous bucentoro into the little boat of the poor Antonio, who, rowing lightly as a dolphin over the waves, arrived in a few minutes at the piazza of the holy St. Marc. With dripping garments, the water streaming from his beard and hair, was the aged Falieri conducted to the church, where the nobility, with faces blanched from terror, completed the ceremony of the procession. The populace, like the nobility, confounded by the disasters of the pageant, amongst which was reckoned that the doge in the haste and confusion was led between the two pillars, where com-

mon malefactors were executed, ceased their acclamations, and thus the day so joyfully begun ended gloomily and mournfully.

No one thought of him who had rescued the doge, Antonio himself thought not of it, but lay in the portico of the ducal palace, wearied, and faint from the pain of the newly opened wound. He was the more astonished when, almost at the fall of night, a ducal trabant tapped him on the shoulder, and saying simply, "come, my friend," led him into the palace, and to the apartment of the doge. Falieri approached him smiling, and said, while he pointed to a bag which lay upon the table: "Thou hast done well, my son; here, take these three thousand zecchins, will'st thou more? so, ask; but never let me see thy face again." While saying these last words his eyes sparkled, and his ruddy cheeks reddened still more deeply.—Antonio knew not what he meant, nor did he take it much to heart, but departed laden with the heavy bag, which he thought he had honourably earned.

Next morning Falieri, glittering in all the splendour of his newly attained sovereignty, looked down from the lofty windows of the palace, upon the populace, who busily plied their warlike exercises. Bodoeri, from youth up the doge's tried and steady friend, entered the chamber, and when Falieri, all absorbed in himself and his dignity, seemed not to remark him, he struck his hands together and loudly laughing cried: "How, Falieri, what lofty thoughts brood and germinate in thy head, since the moment that it was decked with the horned cap?" Falieri, like one awaking from a dream, met Bodoeri with forced affability. He felt that he owed the ducal bonnet to his interference, and his address seemed to remind him of it. But every obligation weighed like a heavy burden on his proud ambitious spirit, and as he could not dismiss the senior of the council, his approved friend, as he had done the poor Antonio, he thanked him constrainedly, and immediately began to speak of the measures to be taken against the enemy. "That," said Bodoeri, interrupting him with a cunning smile, "that, and whatever else the state demands of thee, we shall maturely weigh and consider some hours hence, when the great council is assembled. I come not so early to you to consider how we may defeat the bold Doria, or check Lewis of Hungary, who is again encroaching on our Dalmatian seaports. No, Marino, I have thought of thee alone—and would'st thou think it?—of thy marriage." "How can'st thou," answered the haughty doge, turning his back peevishly on Bodoeri, and looking through the window, "how can'st thou think of that. Ascension-day is yet far off. Ere then, I hope, the enemy shall be defeated, victory, honour, riches, a more splendid power be acquired, for the sea-born Adriatic lion. The bridegroom shall be worthy of his chaste bride." "Bah," said Bodoeri impatiently, "thou speakest of the strange solemnity of Ascension day, when from the bucentoro thou wilt fling the golden ring into the waves, for thy marriage with the Adriatic. Thou, Marino, thou, bridegroom of the ocean! knowest thou no other bride than the cold, moist, treacherous element, which thou would'st rule, and which but yesterday rebelled against thee?—What! wilt thou lie in her icy arms? Would a glowing Vesuvius suffice to warm the frozen bosom of a faithless spouse, who, steady but in falsehood, year after year receives the ring, not as a pledge of love, but as a tribute and a homage from her slave? No, Marino, I will that thou shouldst wed with the fairest the loveliest of earth's daughters." "Thou dotest," muttered Falieri, without turning from the window—"thou dotest, old man. I, a man of eighty years, burdened with care and labour, who never have been married; no longer capable

of loving." "Hold!" cried Bodoeri—"blaspheme not thyself. Does not the rude cold winter at length stretch his gelid arms towards the beauteous goddess, borne to him on the balmy west wind?—And when he presses her to his benumbed bosom—when the soft glow shoots through every pulse, where are then his ice and snow? 'Tis true, thou countest eighty years; but do we reckon age by years alone? Is not thy head as erect, thy step as steady, as forty summers since?—or is thy strength, perhaps, gone—is thy sword lighter, or wearied with the rapid course, must thou pant up the staircase of the ducal palace?" "No, by heaven!" said Falieri, approaching his friend quickly—"no, by heaven! I trace nought of that." "So, then," continued Bodoeri, "enjoy, though old, the happiness reserved for thee. Elevate the woman whom I have chosen, to be dogaressa, and she will be the first in beauty and in virtue, as thou in valour, intellect, and strength." Bodoeri now drew the portrait of a lovely lady, in such lively, skilful colours, that the aged Falieri's eyes sparkled, his face glowed; and, smacking his lips as if he enjoyed glass after glass of fiery Syracusan—"Who, then," said he, smiling—"who is this paragon of beauty of whom thou speakest?" "It is none other," answered Bodoeri, "than my dear niece." "How!" said Falieri; "thy niece—she who married Bertuccio Nenolo, when I was Podesta of Treviso?" "Thou thinkest," replied Bodoeri, "of my niece Francesca, but it is her daughter I intend for thee. Thou knowest that the wild and froward Nenolo was slain fighting at sea. Francesca, inconsolable, buried herself in a Roman cloister, and I had the little Annunciata educated in solitude at my villa in Treviso." "What!" said Falieri, impatiently interrupting him again, "shall I elevate thy niece's daughter to be my bride? How long is it since Nenolo was wedded?—Annunciata can be at most a child of but ten years; when I was Podesta of Treviso, Nenolo's marriage was not yet thought of, and that is"—"five-and-twenty years since"—said Bodoeri, interrupting him, with a laugh, "How thou misreckonest the quick-passed time! Annunciata is a maiden of nineteen years, beautiful as the morning, modest, submissive, unhackneyed in love; as yet she has hardly seen a man: she will cling to thee with infant love, with unassuming devotion." "I will see her, I will see her," cried the doge; for Bodoeri's sketch of the lovely Annunciata came again before his eyes. His wish was fulfilled the same day; for the doge had scarcely returned from the great council, when he was secretly introduced to the lovely Annunciata by the crafty Bodoeri—who had many reasons for wishing to see his niece at Falieri's side as dogaressa. When the aged Falieri saw her, astonished and confounded at her beauty, he could scarcely stammer out his suit. Annunciata, instructed by Bodoeri, knelt before the princely old man, deep blushes on her cheeks. She seized his hand, and pressing it to her lips, lisped softly: "My lord, think you that I am worthy to ascend the ducal throne?—if so, I will honour you from my soul, and be your true maid even unto death." Falieri was enraptured with wonder and enchantment. When Annunciata took his hand, he felt a palpitation through every limb; his head, his body, shook and trembled, and he quickly threw himself on the nearest chair. It seemed as if he would belie Bodoeri's good opinion of the vigorous strength of eighty years. The crafty Bodoeri could scarce suppress a strange smile that played upon his lips; the innocent, unskilled Annunciata remarked it not,—and there was, fortunately, none other present. Whether it was that Falieri, on thinking of meeting the people as the bridegroom of a maiden of nineteen years, felt the awkwardness of such a situ-

ation so much, that he thought it better not to excite the easily roused satire of the Venetians, or whatever might have been the reason, it was determined, with Bodoeri's approbation, that the marriage should take place with the greatest possible secrecy, and that after a few days, the dogaressa should be presented to the seignorie and the people, as long since wedded to Falieri, and now only newly arrived from Treviso, where she had retired during Falieri's embassy to Avignon.

Let us now look at that tastefully dressed and graceful youth, who—a purse of zecchins in his hand—walks up and down the Rialto, speaks with Jews, Turks, Armenians, Greeks, then turns away with clouded forehead, walks farther, stops, again returns, and at length takes a gondola to the piazza St. Marc, where he paces up and down with listless careless step, folded arms, and eyes fixed upon the ground; he heeds not, marks not, the whisper, or the rustling sound, from window, and gorgeous veranda, love tokens for him alone. Who in this youth would recognise that Antonio, who but a few days ago, lay ragged, poor, and miserable, on the marble pavement before the dogana! “Son, my golden son, Antonio, good day! good day!” so cried the old beggar-woman, who sat on the steps of the church of St. Marc, and whom he had passed without observing; when turning quickly he perceived her, he pulled a handful of zecchins from his purse, and threw them to her. “Keep, keep thy gold,” she said, “what will I with it? Am I not rich enough? But if you wish me well, get me a new capuchin, do that my son, my golden son—but keep from the Fontego—from the Fontego.” Antonio looked in her pallid face, which appeared convulsed through terror, while she clasped her thin skeleton bony hands, and with croaking voice, and repulsive laugh, still cried out, “away from the Fontego.” Antonio said, “Cease thy wild insanity, old sorceress!” but as he spoke the last word, the old woman, as if struck by lightning, rolled down the lofty marble steps. Antonio sprang forward, and caught her before she fell. “O my son,” said she, in a low reproachful tone, “what a horrible word thou hast uttered! kill me, rather than repeat it—alas! thou knowest not how deeply thou hast wounded me—me, who have been so true to thee—ah! thou knowest it not.” She stopped suddenly, covered her head with the dark brown cloth, which hung like a short mantle from her shoulder, and groaned as in unutterable agony. Antonio was singularly excited; he carried the old woman to the portal of the church, and placed her on a marble seat. “Thou hast been kind to me, old woman,” said he, “to thee I owe my welfare, my very life; hadst not thou assisted me, I had been long since tossed into the sea, I would not have saved the doge, nor received the rich reward—but were it even not so, I feel myself drawn towards you, by an irresistible impulse—in truth, while yet a porter and a gondolier, I felt as if I should labour harder, to give thee a quattrino.” “O, my son, my dear, dear Tonino,” cried the old woman, while she stretched out her withered arms, “I know it, yes, I know, that thou art attached to me with thy whole soul, for—yet—still—still”—her pointed chin supported on her staff, her eyes fixed upon the ground, she said with a suppressed dull voice, “tell me, my child, canst thou then not remember thy early days, before thou wast a poor miserable wretch, labouring for a scanty support?” Antonio sighed deeply, and replied, “Alas, mother, I know but too well, that I am born of parents who lived in the most luxurious affluence, but I have not the slightest recollection of who they were, or how I lost them; yet, I do remember well, a large and handsome man, who often fondled me in his arms, and also a tender and gentle nurse, who dressed

and undressed me, and at night laid me in a soft bed ; both spoke in a foreign full-toned language, of which I myself lisped many words after them. While I was a gondolier, my comrades said that from my hair, my eyes, my whole appearance, I must be of German origin ; I believe so too, the language of my fosterers (the man was certainly my father,) was German. My most lively recollection of this period is the horror of a night in which I was roused from sleep, by piercing cries of distress ; men ran through the house, and doors were opened and clapped to. At length the woman who nursed me, rushed into the room, snatched me from the bed, and rolling me in her mantle, hurried me away ; from this moment my recollections are gone ; I found myself again in a splendid house, with a man of noble appearance, and friendly bearing, and whom I called father ; he, and every one in the house, spoke Italian. I had not seen my father for many weeks, when one day some strangers of forbidding aspect came and searched through every apartment ; on seeing me, they put me out of doors, threatening to scourge me, if I returned ; crying loudly, I ran away, and scarce a hundred paces from the house, I met an old man, in whom I recognised a servant of my guardian." "Come Antonio," said he, taking me by the hand, "come poor youth, to us that house is shut for ever : we both must seek our bread elsewhere." He brought me with him here to Venice, where I found that he was not so poor as he appeared ; scarce had he arrived, when he ripped a store of zecchins from out his tattered clothing, and passed the entire day upon the Rialto, now as a broker, sometimes himself the merchant. I must be always with him, and when he had concluded a bargain, he never failed to beg a trifle for the figliulo. I lived happily with the old man, who was called, I know not why, Father Blaunas. This did not last long ; thou rememberest, old woman, that time of horror, when the earth began to tremble, shaking palaces to the foundation, and the bells sounded as if tolled by the arms of invisible giants. It is scarcely seven years since ; this was but the forerunner of a still more dreadful calamity—it was known that the plague had passed from the Levant to Sicily, and already raged in Florence ; Venice, as yet was safe—one day Father Blaunas bartered with an Armenian on the Rialto ; the father had sold some wares to the Armenian at a moderate price, and demanded, as usual, a trifle, per il figliulo ; the Armenian, a large strong man, with a thick curly beard, smiled and pressed a couple of zecchins into my hand, which I hastily pocketed. We took a gondola to the piazza of St. Marc ; on the way Father Blaunas asked me for the zecchins, and I know not why, I insisted on keeping them, as the Armenian had given them to myself ; the old man was vexed, but while he was chiding me, I remarked his face becoming of a pallid earthy yellow, and what he said was wild and unconnected. When we arrived on the piazza, he staggered as if he were intoxicated, and fell dead close by the ducal palace :—crying loudly, I threw myself on the body, a crowd assembled, but, at the fearful cry—the plague—the plague—they fled horrified. At that moment I became dizzy, my senses left me : when I revived, I found myself on a mattress in a roomy chamber ; around me lay twenty or thirty pale and wretched figures. As I afterwards learned, some compassionate monks had carried me in a gondola to the Giudecca, in the convent San Giorgio Maggiore, where the Benedictines had established an hospital. The fury of the disease had destroyed my recollection of the past ; the monks could only tell me, that I had been found beside the body of Father Blaunas, whose son I was supposed to be. Gradually my memory returned, and I thought of my early life ; but what I have told thee, old

woman, is all that I can remember—and these are but single unconnected images—Oh! this comfortless solitude in the world, which destroys every enjoyment.” “Tonino, my dear Tonino,” said the old hag, “be satisfied with the lot which thou enjoyest at present.” “Silence, old woman,” cried Antonio, “silence, there is still something more which embitters my life, which restlessly pursues me, and will at length plunge me into hopeless destruction—an unutterable longing, a devouring yearning after a something which I cannot name, nor even clearly imagine, has wound itself into my very existence, ever since I re-awoke to life in the hospital. When poor and miserable, worn out with labour, I threw myself at night on my hard bed, then came dreams, like zephyrs fanning my burning forehead with their balmy breath, pouring out all the blessedness of some rapturous moment, the consciousness of which lies deeply hidden in my soul. Now I rest on soft pillows, and no hard labour consumes my strength, but on starting from the dream, or when I think of it waking, I feel that my solitary existence is but a grinding burden, which I would gladly fling off; all reflection, all meditation is vain—I cannot fathom that glorious passage in my early life, whose dark and indistinct shadow fills me with such bliss, but this bliss becomes devouring torture, racking me to death, when I know, that all hope is lost of finding, of even seeking the unknown Eden—where find the trace of the trackless port?” Antonio stopped, and sighed deeply. During his narrative, the old woman had demeaned herself like one, who carried away by another’s sorrow, reflects back like a mirror each gesture, each expression of grief. “Tonino, my dear Tonino, wilt thou despair because the memory of that blissful moment is lost? Foolish child—foolish child—see there.” People came up and threw alms to the old woman, she cowered down, and cried, “Antonio, Antonio, bring me away—away to the sea;” Antonio seized her almost involuntarily, and led her slowly across the piazza St. Marc; as they went, she murmured solemnly, “Antonio, seest thou the dark blood stains on the ground? Yes, blood—blood—but from the blood spring roses, red beauteous roses, a wreath for thee and for thy love. O thou God of heaven, see that angel of light, so sweet, so star-like, stretching out her snowy arms to embrace thee, in her lily-like bosom? Myrtles shalt thou gather beneath the soft evening sun, myrtles for the virgin-widow—hearest thou the whisper of the night wind, the plaintive moan of the sea?” Antonio was horrified at her words; they had arrived at the pillars which bear the Adriatic lions—he stopped and said harshly, “Here, seat thyself old woman, here upon these steps, and cease thy mopping jabber, which will drive me mad; true, thou hast seen the zecchins in the glowing clouds, but what is this raving of angels—brides—virgin-widow—roses and myrtles? wouldst thou infuriate me, and plunge me into hopeless insanity? Food—zecchins—all thou wishest, thou shalt have, but now I must away.” The old woman caught his cloak and cried, “Tonino, my dear Tonino, look at me but once again.”—Antonio remained, to escape the notice of the passers by, who began to be attracted by the scene. “Tonino,” she continued, “sit down, I must tell thee what is weighing on my heart;” Antonio placed himself on the steps, his back half turned on the old woman, and drew forth his tablets, the blank leaves of which bore sorry witness to his mercantile zeal on the Rialto. “Tonino,” whispered the old woman, “look in my withered face, and say, is there no boding in thy breast, that thou hast seen me long, long since?” “I have already told thee,” answered Antonio, without turning his head, that I feel inexplicably attach-

ed to thee, but thy deformed, shrivelled visage, is not the cause—on the contrary, when I see thy dark sparkling eyes, thy pointed nose, thy blue lips, thy shaggy grey hair, when I hear thy revolting titter, and senseless gabble, I could turn away in horror, and almost believe that thou hadst allured me by some accursed charm.” “Oh God of heaven!” groaned the old woman, “what hellish spirit has inspired that frightful thought! O, Tonino, dearest Tonino, I am that woman who tenderly nursed thee in thy helpless infancy, and saved thy life on that night of horror.”

Antonio in surprise turned quickly round, but when he gazed on her wrinkled face, he cried angrily: “So, thou wilt befool me, old woman? The few recollections of my childhood are vivid and fresh. That kind and beauteous woman is still living before my eyes! Her full and blooming face; her mild dark eyes; her glossy hair and delicate hands—and thou!” “O, holy saints,” sobbed the old woman, “will not my Tonino believe his faithful Margareta?” “Margareta!” murmured Antonio, “Margareta! The name falls indeed like long-forgotten music on my ear. But it is impossible—it is impossible!” “It is true,” resumed the old woman more calmly, “and the large and handsome man who fondled thee in his arms, was thy father: he was a rich merchant of Augsburg. His young and beautiful wife died in giving thee birth. Hating the place where his happiness lay buried, he came and took me with him as thy nurse. On the night when thy father sunk under a cruel fate which also threatened thee, I saved thy life; a noble Venetian took thee in charge, and I myself sought refuge here in Venice. From childhood up, my father, who was a surgeon, and who, it was said, sought after forbidden knowledge, had initiated me in the mysteries of his art. When I was thus deserted in Venice, I exercised this knowledge for my support. I healed the most desperate illnesses in a short time, and my fame soon spread through the entire city. Then the envy of the Ciarlatani who sell their pills and essences on the Rialto, the Zecca, and the piazza St. Marc, was roused. They reported that I was in league with the evil one, and this found belief with the superstitious populace. I was thrown into a dungeon, and cited before the holy tribunal. O, my Tonino, with what horrible tortures did they seek to extort a confession of my guilt. But I was firm; my hair turned grey, my body shrivelled to a mummy, my feet and hands were paralyzed; the most frightful rack, the most dreadful inventions of hellish cruelty, were now tried, and extorted from me a confession at which I still shudder. I was condemned to be burned, when the earthquake shivered the foundation of the palace and the adjoining prison, the doors of the subterranean vaults sprang open, and I crawled out as from the grave, through mounds of ruin. Tonino, I am now but fifty years old; this skeleton frame, this distorted face, these grey hairs, these paralyzed feet, come not from age, but from nameless torments; and that repulsive laugh,—the last rack, at which my hair still bristles, and my frame burns as if encased in a red hot coat of mail, extorted it from me; it has since remained, like an enduring unconquerable convulsion. Recoil not from me, my Tonino! Ah, thy heart has told thee, that when an infant, thou hast lain upon this bosom!” “Woman,” said Antonio thoughtfully, “I must believe thee; but who was my father? what was his name? what was his fate on that calamitous night? and—what was that occurrence of my life, which like some mighty enchantment from an unknown world, still endures, but lost in a sea of misty doubt? This must thou tell me, then will I believe thee!” “Tonino,” she answered sighing,

"for thy own safety I must now be silent; but it will soon, soon, be time. The Fontego—the Fontego—away from the Fontego!" "O," cried Antonio angrily, "I heed not thy mysterious words, to mislead me with accursed craft; my soul is harrowed up;—thou must speak or—" "Hold," cried the old woman, "no threats. Am I not thy faithful nurse." Without waiting for what she further said, Antonio fled away, but cried to her from the distance, "Zecchins shalt thou have as many as thou wilt."

It was in truth wonderful to see the aged Marino Falieri with his blooming spouse. He, strong and robust 'tis true, but a thousand wrinkles on his browned forehead, walking affectedly, his head thrown back; she, grace itself, angelic mildness in her heavenly face, irresistible enchantment in her ardent glance, grandeur and commanding dignity on her ivory forehead, shadowed with dark glossy tresses, and a winning smile upon her lips—the little head bowed with soft feminine humility, above the airy graceful figure; but you know those angel forms which the old painters have seized upon and embodied—such was Annunciata. Could it then fail that all who saw her were astonished and enraptured; and that each fiery youth of the Seigneurie strove to be the Mars of this Venus, cost what it might? Annunciata saw herself surrounded with suitors, whose flatteries she heard in silence and with inattention. In the purity of her soul, she had no other idea of her union with her princely husband, than that she should honour him as her master, and cling to him as her support. He was kind, even tender to her; he pressed her to his ice-cold bosom, called her his love, and gave her the most costly presents; what could she wish for more? She never even thought that it was possible to be false to him; all that lay beyond the narrow circle of her communion with her husband, was unknown—unseen—unimagined by the duteous child; and thus it happened that all solicitations remained unheeded. No one burned with wilder and fiercer passion for the beautiful dogressa than Michel Steno. Though young, he filled the important and influential office of one of the council of forty. If success depended but on outward beauty, he was sure of victory; he did not fear Marino Falieri, who, indeed, since his marriage, seemed to have lost his impetuous wrath and rude ferocity; he sat beside the beautiful Annunciata decked in the richest and most fantastic robes, simpering and shooting soft glances from his small grey eyes, sometimes with a tear of weak delight, asking one after another, if they could boast such a beauteous spouse. Instead of the rough commanding tone in which he was used to speak, he lisped the softest words, his lips scarce moving, called every one his dearest friend, and granted the most ridiculous requests. This growing weakness encouraged Michel Steno to the most hazardous attempts. Annunciata understood not why Steno incessantly pursued her with word and glance; she remained always mild and friendly, and this easy unembarrassed manner made him the more hopeless, and at length drove him to desperation. He had recourse to the most nefarious arts; he intrigued with Annunciata's most confidential attendant, who at length allowed him to visit her at night. Thus he hoped to find a road to Annunciata's undescrated chamber; but the Majesty of Heaven, that ever guards the pure and good, willed that such treacherous baseness should redound only to the infamy of the perfidious profligate. It happened one night that the doge, who had just received the news of Nicolo Pisani's having been defeated at Portelongo by Doria, was walking in deep thought through the corridors of the ducal palace, he per-



ceived a shadow which seemed to glide from Annunciata's apartment towards the stairs; he hastened forward; it was Michel Steno, who was coming from his mistress. A horrible thought shot through Falieri's brain, and with the cry "Annunciata!" he rushed on Steno with drawn sword; but Steno, stronger and more active than the doge, dashed him to the ground, and rushed down the stairs, laughing out as if in mockery, "Annunciata, oh, yes, Annunciata!" The old man rose and tottered hastily to Annunciata's chamber, the pains of hell raging in his bosom. All was still and silent as the grave. He knocked, a strange waiting maid, not she who usually slept in the antechamber, opened the door. "What does my princely husband wish at this late and unusual hour?" said Annunciata in her soft and gentle voice. The old man gazed on her, then raised his hands above his head and cried, "No, it is impossible, it is impossible!" "What is impossible, my lord," said Annunciata, astonished at the earnest tone of the old man; but Falieri without answering, turned to the maid, saying, "Why does not Luigia sleep here to-night as usual?" "Ah," said she, "Luigia insisted on my exchanging with her for to-night: she sleeps in the anteroom, close by the stairs." "Close by the stairs!" cried Falieri joyfully, and hastened to the anteroom. Luigia opened to his knock, and when she saw the wrathful and sparkling eyes of her princely master, she fell upon her knees, and confessed her shame, which was also evidenced by a pair of man's gloves which lay upon the pillow, the perfume of which betrayed their gallant owner. Enraged at Steno's audacity, the doge wrote to him next morning, on pain of banishment from the city, not to approach the ducal palace, the doge or the dogressa. Michel Steno was infuriated at the failure of his well laid plans, at his disgrace, and at his banishment from the object of his adoration. When he learned that the dogressa was mild and condescending as before to the young nobility, envy, and the rage of passion excited the thought that she had rejected him, because some other lover had been more fortunate, and he said so, loudly and publicly. Whether Falieri heard of this shameful report, whether the adventure of that night appeared a warning to him, or whether, notwithstanding all the mild affection of the dogressa, he himself more clearly saw the unnatural disproportion of their union; in short, whatever may have been the reason, he became peevish, sullen and jealous, and confined Annunciata like a prisoned Danae, in the chambers of the ducal palace, where no one was allowed to see her. This occurred shortly before the *Giovedì grosso*. It is the custom at the public rejoicings on the piazza St. Marc, which take place on that day, that the dogressa sits beside the doge on a throne, which is erected opposite the lesser piazza. Bodoeri recollected this, and reminded the doge that his groundless jealousy would be laughed at by the nobility, if, contrary to all custom and usage, Annunciata was excluded from this honour. "Think'st thou," said Falieri, whose pride was at once roused, "think'st thou that I am an old dotting fool, and fear to shew my costly jewel? Thou errest, old man: to-morrow I will walk with Annunciata in solemn procession upon the piazza of St. Marc, that the people may see their dogressa, and on *Giovedì grosso* she shall receive the garland, sitting on her throne." The doge alluded in his last words to an ancient custom.—On *Giovedì grosso*, ropes are extended from the tower of St. Marc into the sea; on them is suspended a machine like a little boat, in which a man shoots down from the top of the tower to the place where the doge and dogressa sit, and presents a wreath of flowers to the latter, or to the

doge if he be alone. Next day the doge did as he had said. Annunciata gorgeously attired, surrounded by the nobility, and attended by pages and Trabanti, walked upon the piazza St. Marc, which was crowded with the populace. The rush, the press, to see the dogaressa was tremendous, and those who succeeded thought that they had had a glimpse of paradise. But amidst the most extravagant expressions of admiration, were heard on all sides sarcasms and jokes, which bore hard enough upon the doge and his young wife. Falieri seemed not to remark it, but walked smiling at Annunciata's side. Before the great gate of the palace, the Trabanti had with difficulty cleared away the crowd, excepting some small parties of the better dressed citizens, who could scarcely be denied entrance even to the inner court of the palace. At this moment a young man who stood with a few others on the balustrade, cried out loudly, "Oh, God of Heaven!" and fell senseless on the pavement. The bystanders surrounded him, so that the dogaressa did not see his face; but at the instant when he fell, an agonizing pain shot through her breast, she grew pale, reeled, and but for immediate assistance, would have fallen. Falieri, full of surprise and consternation at the sudden mischance, heartily wished the young man and his apoplexy at the bottom of the Adriatic, and carried his Annunciata to her apartment.

Meanwhile, they were about to carry off the fainting man, who was thought to be dead, when an old tattered beggarwoman made her way through the dense crowd, and when she saw the senseless youth, cried out fools, fools, he is not dead. She then bent over him, took his head upon her lap, and softly rubbing his forehead, called him by the most endearing names. On looking at her hideous face, contrasted with the beauty of the youth, whose mild features seemed rigid in death, while her's were horribly convulsed, on seeing her thin yellow arms, and her bony hands, trembling on his forehead and his open breast, one might have thought that the revolting figure in whose arms he lay, was death itself incarnate. One by one the by-standers dropped off, and but a few remained, who carried the youth to the great canal, whence he was conducted in a gondola to a house pointed out by the old woman as his residence. Need it be said, that the youth was Antonio, the old woman the beggar of the Franciscan church?

When Antonio was fully awakened from his stupor, and saw the old woman by his bed side, he said, thou art with me, Margaretta; it is well, where could I then find a truer nurse! ah, pardon me mother, that I, a foolish boy, could for a moment doubt thee. Yes, thou art the Margaretta who nursed and fed me, I knew it always, but an evil spirit distracted me. I have seen her—it is she—it is she. Have I not told thee that some dark charm hung over me? I now know all:—was not Bertuccio Nenolo my guardian—yes, answered the old woman, he was; Bertuccio Nenolo, that great Captain, who met his death, crowned with victorious laurels: interrupt me not, said Antonio, hear me patiently, close by Nenolo's palace at Treviso, was a dark, cool, pine forest; one evening that I lay under a tree, gazing on the blue heaven, I fell into a dreamy trance, from which I was roused by a rustling, as from a blow, close beside me in the grass. I looked up, a heavenly child stood over me, and sweetly smiling, said; "Ah, how calmly thou sleepest, and yet was death so near;" close to my breast I saw a small black snake, the child had killed the poisonous reptile with the branch of a nut tree, at the instant when it was ready to sting me. A sweet thrill shot through my frame, I had heard that angels often came down

from heaven, and visibly interposed to save us from destruction, I sunk upon my knees, and cried, "Oh, thou art an angel of light sent to rescue me from death." The beauteous child blushed deeply, and said, I am no angel, I am a simple girl, a child as thou art;—at this moment a silver voice called out *Annunciata, Annunciata*; I must away, said she, my mother calls me; the voice again called *Annunciata*, and the maiden disappeared among the trees. Then was the moment, *Margaretta*, when that love was kindled in my soul, which eternally burns on, in an undying flame: a few days after, I was turned from the house. When I spoke of the child I had seen, and whose voice I thought I heard in the song of birds, the whispering of the trees, and even in the gentle murmur of the waves, *Father Blaunas* told me, that the maiden must have been *Nenolo's* daughter *Annunciata*, who had come to the villa with her mother *Francesca*, and departed the next day. O mother, *Margaretta*, help me heaven—this *Annunciata* is the *dogaressa*! *Antonio* hid his face, sobbing in unutterable agony of grief, "*Tonino*, my dear *Tonino*," said the old woman, "man thyself; away with foolish sorrow, why should thou despair? for whom blooms golden hope, save for lovers, for lovers only! at evening we know not what the morning shall bring forth, suddenly the cloud built castle of our dream stands splendidly realized before us. Thou heedest me not *Tonino*, and yet, I see the fluttering banner of love waving to thee from afar, patience, my love, *Tonino*,—patience." Thus she sought to comfort the poor *Antonio*, and in truth, her words fell like softest music on his ear. He would not suffer her to leave him. The beggarwoman of the *Franciscan* church disappeared, and in her place, the well dressed housekeeper of *Signor Antonio* was seen hobbling round the piazza of *St. Marc*, followed by a *facchino*, with the market basket on his arm.

The *giovedì grosso* arrived, and was celebrated with more than usual splendour. A lofty platform was erected on the lesser piazza of *St. Marc*, for the display of some newly invented fire-works, under the direction of a scientific Greek. In the evening, *Falieri* and his fair spouse appeared upon the gallery, but he was scarcely seated on the throne, when he perceived *Michel Steno* in the same gallery, and so placed that he must of necessity be seen by the *dogaressa*. Infuriated with wrath and jealousy, *Falieri* commanded him to be driven from the place, *Steno* raised his hand against the doge, but the *Trabanti* came up at the moment, and he was compelled to leave the gallery, gnashing his teeth with rage and disappointment, and swearing with horrible imprecations to be revenged.

In the meantime, *Antonio*, distracted at beholding his beloved *Annunciata*, pressed through the crowd, and stung in his harrowed bosom with a thousand pangs, stood in solitary darkness at the sea side. The thought came, was it not better to quench the glowing flame in the cold, cold sea, than slowly to die the racking death of hopeless misery. He had almost made the plunge, when a voice called from a little skiff, "good evening *Signor Antonio*!" By the glare of the illuminations on the piazza, *Antonio* recognised *Pietro*, one of his former comrades, standing in the boat; his cap was decorated with feathers and tinsel, he wore a gay party-coloured jacket, and held a wreath of fragrant flowers in his hand. "Good evening *Pietro*, answered *Antonio*, what wealthy master do you now serve, that you are so gaily dressed." Oh *Signor Antonio*, replied *Pietro*, I earn to-day my three zecchins, I shall slide down from the tower of *St. Marc*, and hand this wreath to the *dogaressa*. "That is a hazardous adventure, friend *Pietro*, said *Antonio*," 'tis true, replied the

other, I may break my neck, and besides, I must pass through the artificial fire. The Greek indeed says, that a hair of my head shall not be injured, but—"Pietro shook his head. Antonio had stepped into the boat, and now first saw that Pietro stood close by the ropes which extended from the tower of St. Marc to the water. "Hear me, Pietro," began Antonio after a moment's silence "would you not willingly earn ten zecchins without perilling your life?" "Truly I would," answered Pietro laughing. "Well, then," continued Antonio, "take these ten zecchins, give me your clothes, and I shall take your place." Pietro shook his head thoughtfully, weighing the gold in his hand, "You are liberal, signor Antonio, and I am poor; but then to hand the wreath to the beautiful dogaressa, to hear her own sweet voice: in truth it is for that one stakes his life; but as it is for you, signor Antonio, be it so." They hastily changed clothes, and Antonio was scarcely ready, when Pietro cried, "quickly into the car, the signal is already given." Instantly the sea glittered like a lake of fire, and the din of rolling thunder filled the air. Antonio shot like a whirlwind through the hissing blaze of the fireworks, and sweeping before the dogaressa alighted uninjured on the platform. She was standing, and now stepped forward; he felt her soft breath playing on his cheek—he handed her the wreath, but the bitter pain of hopeless love, marred the unutterable ecstasy of that moment. Insensate—raving from passion—transport—torture, he seized the dogaressa's hand and pressed it to his glowing lips. The car, like the blind organ of inevitable destiny, now hurried him from her side, and he sank exhausted in Pietro's arms, who awaited him in the boat.

All was by this time uproar and confusion in the doge's gallery; a little scroll was found, fastened to the throne, on which the following words were written in the common Venetian dialect:—

*Il Dose Falier della bella muier.*

*I altri la gode é lui la mantien.*

Falieri, in his fury, vowed the bitterest revenge against the author of this atrocious insult. His eye fell upon Michel Steno, who stood, in the full glare of the torches, immediately under the gallery, and he ordered the *Trabanti* to arrest him on the instant, as the perpetrator of the outrage. All cried out against the conduct of the doge, who, in giving way to his passion, offended both the nobility and populace, trenching on the privileges of the former, for Steno was one of the *tre capi* of the forty, and destroying the festivity of the latter; the nobility left their seats, and Bodoeri alone was seen mixing with the crowd, speaking with angry zeal of the injury offered to the head of the republic, and seeking to excite odium against Michel Steno. Falieri was not mistaken, for in fact it was Michel Steno, who, at the moment when all eyes were turned to the fire-works, had fastened the scroll upon the doge's throne, and then slipped away unobserved. He openly avowed the act, and justified himself, because he had first been insulted by the doge. The nobility were discontented with a chief, who, instead of fulfilling their expectations, daily shewed that his warlike spirit was sinking into feeble dotage; his union also, with a young and beautiful woman, (for it was long since known, that he had been married since his accession to the ducal throne,) and his jealousy, made Falieri no longer appear as a valiant hero, but rather as a *vecchio pantalino*, and thus, the nobility were more inclined to favour Michel Steno, than their deeply injured sovereign. The matter was referred from the council, to the council of forty, of which Steno was himself one of the

chiefs; their sentence was, that Michel Steno had already suffered enough, and that a month's banishment was sufficient punishment, considering the venial nature of the offence. Such was the sentence, which embittered Falieri anew against the nobility, who, instead of protecting their chief, punished offences against his person as transgressions of the most trivial nature.

As has ever happened with lovers, upon whom but a single beam of happiness has shone, Antonio lived days, weeks, months, entranced, calling up visions of paradise and dreamy bliss. Margaretta, who had blamed him severely for his rashness, came in one day, tittering and gibbering, as was her custom, and without hearkening to his inquiries, lighted a fire on the hearth, and having compounded a salve of various ingredients, put it carefully into a little box, and went away mopping and mowing, as she had come. She returned late in the evening, sat down panting and coughing in the great arm chair, and at length, when recovered from her exhaustion, she began: "Tonino, my son Tonino, see canst thou guess where I have been? from whence do I come, whom have I been to see?" Antonio gazed at her, seized with a singular foreboding. "I have seen her, Tonino, I have seen the sweet dove, the charming Annunciata." "Drive me not mad, old woman," cried Antonio. "What!" continued she, "I have been working for thee alone. This morning, while I was cheapening fruit under the colonnade of the palace, the people spoke of the misfortune which had happened to the beautiful dogressa. I made enquiry of a huge uncouth fellow, who was leaning against one of the pillars eating a lime: a young scorpion, said he, has tried its teeth on the little finger of her left hand, the venom has mixed with the blood, and my master, signor Dottore Giovanni Bassegio, is above, and has by this cut off both finger and hand. While he was speaking, there was a cry upon the great staircase, and a little little man was kicked down the stairs by the Trabanti like a foot ball, and rolled before us crying and lamenting. The crowd gathered round him laughing and jeering, while the little man in vain endeavoured to get upon his legs. His servant now sprang forward, caught up the doctor under his arm, and ran away with him, followed by the scoffs and laughter of the people. As I had guessed, when signor Bassegio produced his knife, the doge had made the Trabanti throw him down the stairs. I hastened home, made the salve, hurried back to the palace, and stood on the great steps with the box in my hand. The doge happened to pass by, and looking at me angrily, asked me what I wanted. I made a deep reverence and said, that I had a medicine which would quickly cure the dogressa. When he heard me, he looked at me sternly for a few moments, stroked down his grey beard, and then seizing me by the shoulder, dragged me violently up stairs, and pushed me into the chamber, so that I almost fell upon the floor. Ah, Tonino! there she lay stretched upon the bed, sighing and groaning from pain. I approached her and removed the doctor's foolish plaster; oh, heaven! how the delicate little taper hand was swollen and blood-red. Well, my salve cooled it and assuaged the pain.

The doge was enraptured, and left the chamber, promising me a thousand zecchins, if I cured the dogressa. I sat three hours by her bedside, soothing and rubbing her hand; at length she awoke from a gentle slumber, and the pain had disappeared. When I applied a new dressing, she looked at me, her eyes sparkling with gratitude and kindness, I took advantage of the moment, and said, ah! most gracious dogressa, have not you also saved a life when you killed the snake,

which would have stung a sleeping boy? Tonino thou should'st have seen how her pale cheek glowed, like the snow of the Appenines under the crimson evening sun; how her eyes shot sparkling fire, while she answered, "Yes old woman, Oh yes—I was then an infant.—Oh! he was a lovely boy, as he lay sleeping; often have I thought of him: methinks, since then, my happiness is gone." I now spoke of thee—told her that you were in Venice, that you still bore in your heart all the love, all the rapture, of that moment—that you had hazarded your life to gaze but *once more* on her heavenly eyes, that you had handed her the wreath on *giovedì grosso*! Oh, Tonino! she then cried, as if inspired, "I felt it—I felt it; when he pressed my hand to his lips, when he called me by my name—ah! I knew not then the strange feeling which filled my heart, it was pain—but oh! how mixed with pleasure!—Bring him to me—let me again see that lovely boy." Antonio threw himself on his knees, and cried like a maniac: "Father of heaven! now let me die from some unheard-of destiny—but no!—not yet—not 'till I have seen, 'till I have pressed her to my bosom." He entreated the old woman to lead him to Annunciata that moment, or at least the very next day; but this she was obliged to refuse, as the doge was almost constantly in the chamber of his sick spouse.

Many days passed—the dogaressa was completely cured; but it was still impossible to bring Antonio to her. The old woman soothed his impatience, as best she could—reiterating how she had spoken of his faithful love to the lovely Annunciata. Antonio's steps were always involuntarily directed towards the ducal residence; and one day he saw Pietro standing on the bridge close behind the palace, opposite the prison; in the canal lay a gondola, which, though small, was tastefully ornamented with carving; carried the Venetian flag, and almost resembled the bucentoro. When Pietro saw his former comrade, he called out loudly, "Welcome Signor Antonio—your zecchins have brought good luck with them." Antonio asked carelessly what he meant, but how was he astonished on hearing, that Pietro, almost every evening, carried the doge and dogaressa in his gondola to the Giudecca, where the doge had a pleasure house, not far from San Giorgio Maggiore. Antonio regarded Pietro steadily for an instant, and then said hastily: "comrade thou canst now earn ten zecchins more if thou will'st; let me take thy place, I will row the gondola." Pietro said that could not be, that the doge knew him, and would trust himself with him alone; at length, at Antonio's earnest entreaty, he consented that he should come as his assistant, and that he would pretend to the doge, that he required help on account of illness. Antonio hastened to prepare himself, and he had scarcely returned, dressed as a gondolier, his face stained, and long moustache on his upper lip, when the doge appeared with the dogaressa. "Who is that stranger?" inquired the doge angrily of Pietro, and it was only on Pietro's earnest assurance of his requiring assistance that Falieri permitted Antonio to accompany them.

It often happens, (among men,) that we can restrain our feelings most easily in the very overflow of rapture, and, as if strengthened by the urgency of the moment, subdue all appearance of the flame which is devouring us within. So it was with Antonio; he could conceal his love though close to the beloved one, and rowing with vigorous arm, meditating more hazardous ventures, scarce directed then a transient glance upon Annunciata. The piazza St. Marc, the towers and palaces of proud Venice, lay before them, Falieri looked round haughtily, and said: "How now, my love, is it not noble to sail upon the ocean with

the master, with the spouse of the sea? but he not jealous of a bride who bears us so submissively. Hear the soft ripple of the wave, whispering love to her consort and ruler." "Ah, my lord," replied Annunciata, "How can the cold false sea be thy bride, it is fearful to be wedded with that proud imperious element." "Be not afraid, my love," said Falieri, laughing, "it is better to rest in thy soft warm arms, than in the ice cold bosom of the spouse beneath, but yet it is noble to sail with the master, the spouse of the sea." As the doge spoke these words, music was heard in the distance. The tones of a soft male voice came nearer and nearer, gliding along the water, and at length they heard distinctly the words,

Ah! senza amare  
Andare sul mare  
Col sposo del mare  
Non può consolare.

Other voices joined, in alternate chorus, and the words were again and again repeated, 'till the sweet sounds slowly subsided in a dying fall, like the distant sighing of the summer wind. Falieri seemed not to hearken to the song, but detailed at length to the dogressa, the solemnities of ascension day: how the doge, flinging a ring from the bucentoro, was wedded with the Adriatic sea.

He spoke of the victories of the republic, how Istria and Dalmatia were conquered under the regency of Peter Urceolus II. and how that conquest became the origin of the solemnity. But if the aged Falieri hearkened not to the song, his narrative was lost upon the dogressa. She sat there, her soul rapt in the sweet strain which floated over the still water; when the song had ended, she gazed vacantly before her, like to one waking from a dream, still beckoning the images that mocked him in slumber.—"Senza amare—senza amare—non può consolare"—she lisped softly, and tears glittered like pearls in her starry eyes, and sighs burst from her snowy bosom, which heaved with restless anxiety. They landed: the doge, still occupied with his story, stood with the dogressa on the balcony of his villa and perceived not that Annunciata stood beside him in silence, gazing on an imaginary world. A young man in sailor's dress sounded a horn, and on this signal, another gondola approached. A man carrying a bongrace, and an old woman joined them, and thus accompanied, the doge and the dogressa walked to the palace. The second gondola arrived, Marino Bodoeri with a number of persons, amongst whom were merchants, artists, and even individuals from the lowest ranks of the people, followed and applauded the doge.

Antonio was all impatience for the next evening, expecting a favourable message from his beloved Annunciata. At length the old woman arrived, threw herself in her arm-chair, and, clasping her withered hands, cried out, "Tonino, O! Tonino, what has then happened to the poor Annunciata? To-day, when I entered, she lay upon the couch, her eyes half shut, her head supported on her arm, not slumbering, yet not awake, not sick, yet ill at ease. I approached her, and asked her, if she still suffered from the newly healed wound. Her eyes rested on me, (Heavens, what eyes!) then sunk beneath their silken lashes, like trembling moon-beams veiled behind a cloud. She sighed deeply! her pale face turned towards the wall, and murmured softly, very softly, but O! how mournfully, 'Amare, Amare, Ah! senza Amare!' I seated myself beside her, and began to talk of thee. She buried her face in the pillow; her breathing became hurried; I

told her that thou hadst gone disguised in the gondola; that I would lead you to her. She started from the bed, burst into tears, and cried, 'In the name of all the saints—no, no, I can never see him—I adjure thee, old woman, tell him he shall never, never see me. He shall leave Venice, and never more return.' Then must my poor Tonino die, I answered. She sank upon the couch, and sobbed, half choked with tears, 'must not I also die the bitterest of deaths?' Falieri now entered the chamber, and signed to me to withdraw. 'O God,' cried Antonio, in desperation, 'she has rejected me—away, away to destruction.' 'Foolish, foolish child, replied the old woman, 'does not Annunciata love thee with all the fervour, all the ardency of a woman's heart? To-morrow evening, late, slip into the ducal palace. Thou wilt find me on the second gallery, to the left of the great staircase; we will then see what can be further done.'

When Antonio stole up the great staircase on the following evening, he felt as if he were about to commit some unheard of iniquity. Half stupified and trembling, he could scarcely mount the steps; he leaned against a pillar, close to the appointed place. Suddenly the full glare of torch-light fell upon the place where he stood, and before he could leave the spot, Marino Bodoeri stood before him, accompanied by several servants who bore the torches. Bodoeri looked him steadily in the face, and said, "Ha! thou art Antonio; they have stationed thee here; I know it; but follow me." Antonio followed him dismayed, convinced that his intended interview with the dogressa had been discovered. How was he astonished, when, on entering a remote chamber, Bodoeri embraced him, and spoke of the important part which had been confided to him, and which he should fill on this night with courage and determination. Astonishment, however, was changed to anxiety and horror, when he learned that a conspiracy had been long since planned against the nobility; that the doge was himself the head of the conspirators, and, as had been determined at Falieri's villa on the Giudecca, that on this night the nobility should be destroyed, and Falieri proclaimed sovereign of Venice. Antonio gazed at Bodoeri in speechless astonishment, who, considering his silence as arising from hesitation to participate in the dreadful deed, cried out, enraged, "False coward! from this palace there is no escape. Thou diest, or bearest arms with us; but first speak with him," pointing to a lofty, noble figure, who stepped from the dark back-ground of the chamber. When Antonio saw his face, astonished at his unexpected appearance, he fell upon his knees, and cried, "Great God of heaven, my father! my beloved guardian, Bertuccio Nenolo!" Nenolo raised him from the ground, clasped him in his arms, and said in a mild voice, "True, Antonio, I am Bertuccio Nenolo, whom thou hast thought buried in the sea, and who indeed, but a short time since, escaped from slavery far worse than death, with the savage Morbassan. I am that Bertuccio Nenolo who cherished you, and who little thought that the boorish servants whom Bodoeri sent to take possession of my villa, would have cast thee forth upon the world. Foolish boy, dost thou hesitate to take arms against a desperate aristocracy, whose cruelty deprived thee of a father? Go to the Fontego; it is thy father's blood which stains the pavement. When the senate sold the warehouse, which is called the Fontego, to the German merchants, it was forbidden that any proprietor should take the key with him on a journey; it must be left with the Fontegaro. Thy father had broken through this order, and had been heavily fined. On his return, however, when the stores were opened,



a chest of false Venetian money was found amongst his goods. Thy father in vain protested his innocence; it was but too certain that some traitor, perhaps the Fontegaro himself, had placed it there to work his destruction. The judges, satisfied with the proof that the chest had been found amongst his merchandise, condemned him to death, and he was executed in the court before the Fontego. Thou also hadst been destroyed, had not the faithful Margareta saved thy life. I, thy father's truest friend, received thee; and lest thou mightest betray thyself to the nobility, we concealed thy father's name from thee. But now, Antonio Dalbirger, now is the time, now avenge thy father's shameful death." Antonio, inspired with the thirst of revenge, swore fidelity to the conspirators.

It is well known that Bertuccio Nenolo had joined his ambitious son-in-law in a conspiracy against the nobility, to avenge the insult he had received from the Admiral Dandolo, who, in the heat of dispute, had struck him in the face. Both Nenolo and Bodoeri desired the elevation of Falieri, that they might rise along with him. The conspirators had plotted to spread the report that the Genoese fleet had appeared before Venice. The great bell of St. Marc was to be tolled, and the city summoned for defence against the imagined enemy. At this signal, the conspirators, who were numerous, and extended through all Venice, were to assemble on the piazza St. Marc, seize upon the strong places of the city, massacre the heads of the nobility, and proclaim the doge sovereign.

Heaven had willed it otherwise. The meetings at the Giudeka had not escaped the watchfulness of the council of ten, but they found it impossible to obtain any certain information. One of the conspirators, however, a Pisan merchant, named Bentiau, wished to save his friend and cousin, Nicolao Leoni, who was one of the decemvir council. He called upon him late in the evening, and adjured him not to leave his house that night, happen what would. Leoni was seized with suspicion; he caused Bentiau to be arrested, and was soon in possession of all the details of the plot. In conjunction with Giovanni Gradenzio and Marco Cornaro, he summoned the council of ten to St. Salvator, and in less than three hours all the necessary precautions were taken to smother the insurrection in its infancy.

It was confided to Antonio to go with a party and toll the bells of the tower of St. Marc. On arriving, he found the tower guarded by a strong party of soldiers from the arsenal, who, on his approach, charged his party with set halberds. His band, seized with a sudden panic, took to flight, and he himself escaped in the darkness of the night. He heard steps close behind him; he was seized, but when in the act of poignarding his pursuer, he recognised Pietro by a sudden gleam of light.

"Save thyself, Antonio, in my gondola," said Pietro—"all is lost; Bodoeri, Nenolo, are in the hands of the senate; the palace gates are shut; the doge a prisoner in his chamber, watched by his faithless Trabanti." He hurried the stupified Antonio to his gondola. The council of ten condemned the ringleaders of the conspiracy, and they were executed that very night; next morning their bodies were seen exposed on the gallery of the palace facing the lesser piazza St. Marc; Marino Bodoeri and Bertuccio Nenolo were amongst them. Two days after, Marino Falieri was beheaded on the giant stairs of the palace.

Antonio was not among those arrested, for no one knew that he was a conspirator. When he saw Falieri's grey head roll upon the scaffold,

he awoke as from a dream; with a cry of horror he rushed into the palace; he passed through the galleries unquestioned by the Trabant, who themselves seemed horrified at the dreadful scene they had just witnessed. Margaretta met him, seized his hand—a few steps, and he was in Annunciata's chamber. She lay senseless on her couch; Antonio threw himself at her feet, covered her hand with glowing kisses, invoked the beloved one by the softest, most endearing names. She opened her eyes slowly, regarded him for a moment, as if bewildered; then started up, and, clasping him in her arms, lay weeping on his neck. "Antonio, my Antonio, I love thee unutterably. Yes there is yet a paradise on earth; what is the death of father, uncle, spouse, compared to the blessedness of thy love!—O let us fly, far, far from this bloody scene, to peace and bliss in the happy home of some quiet dell.

Amidst a thousand kisses, a thousand tears, the lovers swore eternal truth; lost in the rapture of the moment, they forgot the fearful events of that dreadful day. The old woman counselled them to fly to Chiazza; from whence they could take a secure though circuitous route to Antonio's birth place. Pietro procured a small bark, which waited at the bridge behind the palace. At night, Annunciata accompanied by her lover and Margaretta, who carried a basket of costly jewels, stole from the palace, and arrived unobserved at the bridge. The bright moon glittered softly on the waves, as gliding over the calm ripple, they soon gained the open sea. Suddenly a low moaning sound was heard sweeping through the air, dark clouds gathered round the moon, hiding it in the deep blackness of the thunder storm. The whirlwind came rushing on, the bark was tossed upon the foaming billows; "Help, O God of Heaven," shrieked Margaretta. Antonio embraced his Annunciata, who, awakened by his glowing kisses, clasped him to her heart with the fervour of the holiest love. "My Antonio—my Annunciata,"—they cried, in the tenderest tones, regardless of the hurricane which raged so fearfully around them. The sea, the jealous widow of the discrowned beheaded Falieri, now stretched forth her foaming billows like giant arms, seized upon the lovers, and buried them in the fathomless abyss!

When the stranger had thus ended his narrative, he started from his seat, and strode rapidly from the room. The friends gazed after him in silence and astonishment, then stepped anew before the picture. The old doge still smiled on them in foolish splendour, and doting vanity; but in contemplating the dogaressa's countenance more intently, they could perceive an unknown, a foreboded sorrow, shadowing her fair forehead, as the dreams of yearning love glanced from beneath those dark eye-lashes, and played upon her ruby lips. The fiend-like powers of death and desolation seemed enthroned amidst the gloomy clouds which hung upon the distant sea. The deeper spirit of the picture lay clear before them, and, whilst they gazed upon it with a rapt attention, all the mournful story of Antonio's and Annunciata's loves returned to their thoughts, and filled them with a pleasing sadness.